DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 051 103 SP 004 968

TITLE	An Exchange Program in Teacher Education for British and American Students.
INSTITUTION	Connecticut Univ., Storrs. School of Education.
PUB DATE	70
NOTE	14p.; 1971 AACTE International Education Award entry
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Education Majors, Elementary Education, *Field Experience Programs, *International Programs, *Preservice Education, *Student Exchange Programs, *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS	England

ABSTRACT

The University of Connecticut-Keswich Hall College exchange program is a 7-week experience which offers British and American students and faculty the opportunity to learn first-hand about the education and culture of another country. American students go to England from June 1 until mid-July, while British students come to the United States from September 1 until mid-October. Features of the program are 1) direct involvement and participation of students in elementary schools in the host countries; 2) opportunities for crosscultural understanding through the "host family" plan and visitation program; 3) participation of graduate students as "overseas assistants"; 4) cooperative fiscal investments of local schools and the university without outside funding. The program began in 1968 with 13 students participating from each college. It has been offered continually since that time with the number of students growing to 30 per year. (An appendix to the report contains comments on the program by British and American students.) (RT)

ED051103

AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM IN TEACHER EDUCATION FOR BRITISH AND AMERICAN STUDENTS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Submitted to

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

by

The University of Connecticut

The School of Education

1970-1971

SP004968

AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM IN TEACHER EDUCATION
FOR BRITISH AND AMERICAN STUDENTS

I. Summary of the Program

The University of Connecticut-Keswick Hall College exchange program is a 7-week experience which offers British and American students and faculty the opportunity to learn first-hand about the education and culture of another country. Professionally, the program represents the interest of University of Connecticut students and faculty in the British Primary School movement that has emerged as a major force influencing American education. Of equal importance is the conviction that an international dimension is of vital importance in a modern teacher education program.

The unique features of this program are: (1) direct involvement and participation of both American and British students in elementary school classrooms in host countries; (2) opportunities for cross-cultural understanding through the "host family" plan and visitation program; (3) opportunity for professional and cross-cultural enrichment for participating British and American teacher education faculty; (4) opportunity for graduate students to participate through "overseas assistantships"; (5) enrichment of the education of American British children through their exposure in the classroom to young people from another country; (6) opportunity for British and American teachers to discuss educational movements and issues in Britain and America through contact with visiting students and faculty; (7) opportunity for increased cross-cultural understanding among host families in both countries; (8) cooperative

fiscal investments of local schools and the university without "outside" funding.

II. Comprehensive Explanation and Analysis of Program

A. Description and Development

The program consists of a seven week experience abroad for British and American participants. American students go to England from approximately June 1 until mid-July, while British students come to the United States from approximately September 1 until mid-October.

The program began in 1968 with thirteen students participating from each college. It has been offered continually since that time and the number of students participating has grown to approximately thirty per year.

A detailed description of the unique features of the program follows:

1. Classroom Involvement and Participation

Both British and American students spend at least four weeks of the seven week program working as teacher aides in elementary schools. This allows participating students to see the educational program in action from the inside, work with children and to talk on a face-to-face basis with teachers, children, principals and headmasters.

2. Cross-Cultural Understanding

British and American students live with families in their host nations. This provides an opportunity for both groups to gain understanding of differing life-ways that would be impossible if students

were to live in American (or British) "enclaves" abroad. In addition, the program provides for extensive travel to cultural and historic places of interest, as well as a program of lectures on aspects of life in the host country.

3. Faculty Participation

Each year a British and an American faculty member accompanies his group to its destination abroad. Since the program began (1968) four University of Connecticut and three Keswick Hall College faculty members have participated in it. In each case this was their first experience in the host country.

4. Graduate Student Participation

An "overseas assistantship" is provided each year for an American graduate student with a demonstrated interest in British primary education. One participating graduate student has taken a year's leave and is now teaching in an Oxfordshire school. He plans to concentrate on aspects of British education in his dissertation, as does a second participating graduate student.

5. Enrichment of British and American Children

Participating school systems in both countries are enthusiastic about the role played by visiting "teacher aides". Invariably the students are asked to describe life in their countries, and to compare customs and practices in both countries. Students come equipped with slides, photographs and other artifacts for potential school use.

6. Professional Growth of British and American Teachers

Americans in particular are greatly interested in "open" or "informal" education as exemplified in the best of the British schools.

They find it challenging to be able to discuss their ideas with British students and faculty. Invariably these young people are asked to speak at PTA meetings or at faculty meetings in the schools. Similar activities, of course, take place in Britain.

7. Family Participation

While the students learn from their host families, so do the families learn from the students. The program, in fact, has had a community-wide impact that we did not anticipate. The program's influence extends far beyond the participating colleges' boundaries.

8. Cooperative Investment

Student fees (the program carries six academic credits for University of Connecticut students) provide the basic budget out of which local travel, faculty and graduate assistant stipends and other incidental costs are paid. Participating American school systems pay each British student $250 for his work as a teacher aide. Host families provide free room and board for students in both countries.

B. Objectives

1. To provide American students and faculty in teacher education with first-hand experiences in British schools that best exemplify the "open education" or "Leicestershire Plan" model.

2. To provide British students and faculty in teacher education with first-hand experiences in American elementary schools.

3. To foster increased understanding of a society different from one's own among participating British and American students and faculty.

4. To bring about increased interaction among cooperating schools, teachers, and the communities they represent and the students and faculty of the University of Connecticut.

C. Personnel Involved

1. Two University of Connecticut co-directors who organize the program as part of their regular academic load.

2. One Keswick Hall College director who organizes British aspects of the program as part of his regular academic load.

3. Public school personnel i.e., teachers and principals (or headmasters) in cooperating schools.

4. Volunteer host families.

5. One graduate assistant (1/8 time).

6. University and college lecturers in social science, education, and the humanities.

7. A variety of community resource people.

D. Budget

Participating University of Connecticut students enroll in Education 226 for six academic credits and pay tuition fees of $210 for the course. If twenty students participate in the program, its operating budget would consist of $210 x 20, or $4,200.

Personnel	$2,500
Local Travel*	700
Miscellaneous costs*	1,000
+Administrative	$4,200

*These figures will vary from year to year

Students pay their own transportation costs.

Host families provide food and lodging for participating students and (if desired) faculty.

British students are paid $250 each for their work as teacher aides in American schools by the participating school systems, which is even further evidence of the development of the partnership concept in teacher education.

E. Contribution to the Improvement of Teacher Education

1. A model of a working partnership in terms of time and dollars investments among local schools, communities, an American university and a college overseas.

2. Broadening the base of teacher education to include a viable, stimulating, and enriching international dimension.

3. Traditional classroom instruction is replaced by an experience based approach to the understanding of a new educational process--in this instance, the British primary or "open education" model.

4. Utilization of a variety of persons from various divisions of the participating college and university as well as public school personnel and community representatives as human resources in the program.

Evaluation

Feedback from participating students, faculty, principals, teachers, and host families has been overwhelmingly positive. As might be expected, the "teacher aide" experience was rated as the single, most valuable aspect of the program.

A sampling of specific reactions to various phases of the program accompanies this report.

APPENDIX

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional Program Details

Basically, the program for both British and American students follows this pattern:

Week	American Students in Britain	British Students in the U.S.
I and II	Lecture Series: 1. British History and Society 2. Politics and the British Political System 3. The British Economy 4. Art as Taught in British Schools 5. English as Taught in British Schools 6. Music as Taught in British Schools 7. The Development of British Education 8. Plowden Report and Recent Reforms in Education	Lecture Series: 1. An Introduction to the U.S. 2. Politics and the American Political System 3. America and the Arts 4. Social Problems in the U.S. 5. The American Economy 6. The U.S. and the World 7. The Development of American Education 8. Current Issues in American Education
III, IV, V, and VI	School experience: Teacher aides spend two weeks in urban primary schools and two weeks in rural schools. They observe classes and participate in classroom activities.	School experience: Teacher aides spend all of their time in one school. They observe classes, participate in classroom activities and talk with children at all grade levels. This phase of the program also affords English students an opportunity to attend school board meetings, building committee meetings, and town meetings.
VI, VII	De-briefing and Evaluation: An evaluation session is conducted for students to share their experiences.	De-briefing and Evaluation: Students return to campus for a discussion and evaluation of their experiences. Time is also provided during this session for students to visit classes at the University of Connecticut.

Enrichment Experiences

American Students in Britain

Weekends are utilized by students to gain added insights into the British way of life and educational system. For example, they visit:

1. A British grammar school, a secondary modern school and a girls's boarding school
2. An immigrant school in Birmingham
3. The University of East Anglia
4. Maria Grey College of Education, London
5. Summerhill
6. Oxfordshire Primary Schools
7. Stratford-on-Avon
8. London
9. Coventry Cathedral
10. Some students visited France, Scotland, North Wales and Ireland on free weekends and also took trips with "host families"

British Students in the U.S.

British students visited:

1. Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts
2. State Capitol and business community in Hartford, Connecticut
3. Classes at the University of Connecticut
4. A University of Connecticut football game
5. Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
6. Experiment in teacher education for the inner city
7. New York City
8. Boston, Massachusetts (Freedom Trail)
9. Vermont and Green Mountains

Evaluation

Without attempting a thorough reporting of our evaluative data, the following comments may give the reader some notion of the value English and American students place upon their exper iences abroad:

American Students' Reactions	British Students' Reactions
1. No matter which school I visited or the attitude of the adults, I always found the children friendly and eager to learn.	1. Just great--if it only had been six months.
2. It was the school children who made the trip interesting and enjoyable. They were lively and so much fun.	2. It was so enjoyable that it didn't seem like work even though I was busy every day.
3. I was thoroughly enthused with being able to work with the children. I could work with them for sixteen hours a day.	3. This was fascinating--I especially enjoyed being with black children.

One of the things that impresses the students most is the manner in which they are treated by the faculties of the various schools. As one of the students expressed it, "I was treated as if I were a member of the teaching staff."

All of the participating schools report that the students very definitely added something to their schools. None of the schools report negative response to the program.

It is important to note that responses to the school experiences phase of the program indicated that students do much more than observe classes. They work with children. Students spend time with various classes sharing interesting and informative stories about their own country. They discuss differences in monetary systems, climate and

weather, and their own way of life.

Another aspect of the program that must be considered a success is the utilization of "host families". Students stay with host families while on campus and in participating communities. It would be difficult to describe all the experiences they have with their host families. However, we feel the following statements indicate the students' reaction to this phase of the program:

American Students

1. "I can never express how much I have learned from living with a British family. My hosts were extremely kind and considerate. Their generosity and hospitality have made my stay here a memorable one. I only hope next year's students are as fortunate."

2. "Staying with "host families" is the best way to really learn about England and its people."

3. "The most worthwhile part of the trip--meeting and talking to people in their own environment."

British Students

1. "Second to the school experience this was the most valuable part of the trip, living with American people. One learned far more than from all the lectures combined."

2. "Most valuable part of the entire trip because of the friendliness of the "host families". To be able to share, and in most cases to be part of the family life was much more profitable than staying in a college dormitory."

3. "Living with families in their homes was far more valuable and enjoyable than living on campus. It gave me a good insight into the way Americans think and feel on important national and international issues."

4. "If we had all stayed in a dormitory or hotel, our experience of American way of life might just as well have been gained in the cinema. American hospitality and friendship was overwhelming."

Perhaps the success of the total program can best be summarized

by the following student comments:

American Students

"My stay in England has been most enjoyable and I hope that this exchange program will continue to be as beneficial in the future to students as I have found it to be. The school visits gave me a first hand experience in different types of British schools."

"I have learned much about England and the British people, but I also have learned more about America and Americans. This has been a wonderful experience and has pointed out to me how little I really know about my own country and its educational system."

"I don't think I could put down on paper the thousands of words it would take to sum up this experience. And I could never tell you the impact of those first two weeks or so in England. Everything was new, exciting, and different."

"I will never forget my experiences here or the people I've met. It's all been so marvelous. People are alike everywhere and I've been lucky enough to have met some of the nicest ones in the world."

"Coming to a new country and meeting people with a slightly different culture has made me more aware of myself--not merely as an individual but as an ambassador. Discussing modes of living, the contrast of family life and views on political and personal problems has made me far more conscious of myself as a "citizen" of my country and someone who must be concerned in its affairs. I have made one or two lasting friends

British Students

"This is a marvelous program and I feel its most beneficial to both my professional and personal life. Professionally--if children in England are as interested about American children as Americans are about English, it will be fun to tell them about them. I think it is important that we should be aware of what different things happen in two fairly similar countries."

"This type of exchange cannot fail to be an aid towards good international relationships which indeed are necessary in our day and generation when there is so much strife and such great difficulty in communication--knowing people you have never met."

"In having the opportunity of comparing American Education to English, I feel that I can now understand English Education better, and I also know much more about American Education. I have been made to feel strongly the importance of education, to be child-centered and not entirely teacher-directed. When I am teaching I shall appreciate the fact that the curriculum in England is not as rigid as in America."

"This program has given me a greater understanding of the life and people of a nation of whom we hear, read and see so much through mass media that our impressions are often wrong. I have made many invaluable friends where I was working and I now feel a great loss. I enjoyed the trip so much that I wish to return to America. It has taught me that there are many differences in our teaching and teacher training yet that children here to me are very much on a par to those at home. Once on my own away from the group and working I was allowed to be a person and a teacher and I cannot put into words the feeling of happiness that this gave me."

over here and through them I've been
given much insight into the British
people and their educational system."